



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

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Frederick Man Sentenced for Sexual Solicitation of a Minor

A Howard County judge has sentenced a Frederick man to 45 days in jail for his conviction on the sexual solicitation of a minor. The minor was a Maryland State Police investigator from the Maryland Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Rafael E. Constante, 29, of the 5800 block of Drawbridge Court pleaded guilty to the charge on November 3, 2016 and was sentenced this morning. On Tuesday, May 24, the police task force conducted an undercover, proactive operation involving the online sexual solicitation of minors.

According to police and prosecutors, Constante posted a personal ad on the "casual encounters" section of the website Craigslist. The police investigator, posing as a 13-year-old girl named "Sarah" responded to his ad and an e-mail exchange occurred, during which Constante attached nude photographs of himself.

Despite repeated assertions from the undercover investigator that she was a 13-year-old girl, Constante suggested having a sexual relationship and offered to pick her up in his car. "Sarah" agreed to meet Constante at a Columbia drugstore. He was arrested there by undercover state troopers on May 25, 2016.

At the conclusion of the sentencing hearing, Howard County Circuit Court Judge Mary M. Kramer sentenced Constante to three years, suspending all but 45 days, to be served on 15 consecutive weekends. She placed him on five years of supervised probation and ordered him to pay court costs, to have no unsupervised contact with children under 16 and to register as a sex offender.